De Zee-Atlas Ofte Water-Waereld (1666) by Hendrik Doncker

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ZEE-ATLAS OFTE WATER-WAERELD (1666)

By

HENDRIK DONCKER

An exhibition

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ZEE-ATLAS OFTE WATER-WAERELD (1666)

BY HENDRIK DONCKER

It is well known that the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produced what has been called the "golden age of cartography", centred at Amsterdam for much of that period.

The demands of an extensive mercantile empire necessitated a special study of map-making among the Dutch, whose traders and sailors continually returned home with invaluable first-hand knowledge for their geographers and other scholars. As a result, the Netherlands dominated the world market in map and atlas production.

One of the most respected and commercially successful in the industry was Hendrik Donckers (1626-1699), who worked fifty years as an Amsterdam bookseller and publisher of charts and other works on navigation. (The charts in this exhibition mention the address "Nieuwe Brugsteeg" and "in 't Stuurmans gereetschap", the latter phrase referring to his house, the "Mariners Instruments").

Doncker's charts were considered the most up-to-date in the later seventeenth century and the Zee-atlas, first issued in 1659, ran to numerous editions.

The atlas displayed corresponds to that described as "variant A" at Don 9 A in Cornelis Koeman's bibliography, Atlantes Neerlandici. It has thirty-two charts, all of which have been detached and mounted. All are by Doncker except the first. The "register" at the end of the introduction indicates only the twenty charts of the 1660 atlas, as the dedication and introduction of this edition were taken from that printing.

Maps shown are:

CASE I

1. Nova totius terrarum orbis tabula. 1660.

   Frederick de Wit made this world map.

2. Pas-kaart van Europa met een gedeelte van de kust van Africa tot aen Cabo Verde. 1665.

   North is oriented to the right.

CASE II

3. Pas-caert van Texel tot aen de hoofden, vertoonende de zee-custen van Vrieslant, Hollant, Zeelant, Vlaenderen, en de oost kust van Engeland,

als mede hoemen alle de selve kusten en havens uyt der zee sal aendoen.

A vast drainage project begun in 1920 has reclaimed much of the old Zuider Zee shown here.
The former islands of Urk and Schokland, with its settlement of Ens, are now part of the North-East Polder. The last remaining island, Marken, is being incorporated into the Markerwaard, now under construction.

4. Pascaart van de zee-custen van Ruslant, Laplant, Finmarcken, Spitsbergen en Novazemla. Nieuwlycx uytgegeven. 1664.

Donckers was first to delineate Spitzbergen up to the east coast of Edge Island, and to include the King Karl (Rjik Yse) Islands. Kanin Peninsula (Candenoes) is presented as an island, and the north orientation of the inset of Dvina Bay, at lower right, is to the bottom.

CASE III

5. Pas-caerte van Groenlandt, Yslandt, Straet Davids en Ian Mayen Eylant; hoemen de selvige van Hitlant en de noord kusten van Schotlandt en Yrlandt beseylen mach.

"Martyn Frobischers Straet", found on several other contemporary maps, marks the supposed routes of Frobisher in 1576, 1577 and 1578. In actual fact he rounded the south of Greenland.
Cape Desolation was a landmark for early explorers.

6. Pas-caart van de Oost Zee verthoonende alle de ghelegentheyt tusschen 't Eylandt Rugen en Wyborg. Nieuwlycx uytgegeven. 1664.

The port of Tallinn (Revel) is shown on an exaggerated outline of Estonia (the "Lyflant").
At lower right, the inset of the Danzig Lagoon depicts the Vistula Spit as an island. North is at the bottom.
The top-left inset is of the city of Stockholm and its environs.

CASE IV

7. Pas caart van de Canaal tusschen Engeland en Vrancrijck. 1661.

"Vaelmuyen", "Pleimuyen" and "Ornay" are Falmouth, Plymouth and the island of Alderney.
Here the Portland Bill is completely an island.

8. Pas-caart van Hispangien, vertoonende de custen van Granade, Andaluzie, Algarve, Portugael, Galissien en Biscajen; met een gedeelte van Vranckryck: streckende van Heysant tot de Straat van Gibralter.

North lies to the left in this chart. To the right is the northern coast of Morocco (Barbariae Pars).
Leon Island, site of the city of Cadiz, is magnified.

CASE V

9. Pas kaert van 't oostelycke deel der Middelandsche Zee. Nieuwlyx gedruckt en uytgegeven. 1664.

The index is of islands, points of land and harbours in this eastern part of the Mediterranean.

10. Pascaart van de zee-custen van Angola, en Cimbebas van Rivier de Galion tot C. de Bona Esperanca. 1659.

This chart shows the west coast of Africa from the River Gabon (Galion) south to the Cape of Good Hope.
An enlarged-scale inset of the Cape north to St. Helena Bay is at the top.

CASE VI

11. t' Wester deel van Oost Indien, streckende van C. de bona Esperance tot Ceylon. 1666.

The large delta near the Gujarat Plain (Guzaratte) is that of the Indus River.
Near the old port of Suez is shown an oasis, the "Springs" or "Wells" of Moses, an early source of fresh water before canal construction. Moses was reputed to have made the water miraculously sweet.

12. t' Ooster deel van Oost Indien, streckende van Ceylon tot Japan en Hollandia Nova.

Among Europeans, Dutch navigators produced the first authentic information about Australia, as historical notations on this chart would suggest.
Tasman's explorations in 1644 made possible this representation of the north and west coastlines of the continent.

CASE VII

13. Pascaerte vande Caribische Eylanden vande Barbados tot aende Bocht van Mexico.

    Here Central America appears as a solid extension of South America. The large inlet west of the Mississippi Delta indicates Espiritu Santo Bay, in what is now Texas.

14. Pas caert van Nieu Nederland, Virginia en Nieu Engelant. Nieulycx uytgegeven. 1660.

    The American east coast is drawn, from Virginia north to Cape Cod. West of Chesapeake Bay is the James River, where lies the historic site of Jamestown Island (formerly, as here, a peninsula). "Lems Town" would be Williamsburg, just north of it.
    Further north, on the Connecticut River, the Dutch "Fort goede Hoop" is precursor to present-day Hartford.

CASE VIII

15. Paskaert van Brasilia van Pernambuco tot C. de S. Antonio.

    This chart displays the coast of Brazil from the River Plate north to the site of the city of Recife. The large lagoon immediately above the Plate is the Lagoa dos Patos.

16. Paskaarte van't zuydelyckste deel van America van Cabo St. Antonio, tot Caep de Hoorn, en de inde Zuyd-Zee, tot B. de Tongoy.

    Tierra del Fuego was not thoroughly surveyed until the nineteenth century. "Estrada de S. Sebastian", near the Strait of Magellan, is really San Sebastian Bay.
    The large island south of Valdivia (Baldivia) is Chiloé, and the controversial Falklands, or Malvinas, are here named after a Dutch visitor of 1598, Sebald de Wert.

RELATED MATERIALS IN THE EAST READING ROOM CASES

17. JAMES, THOMAS, 1593?-1635?

    The platt of sayling for the discoverye of a passage into the South Sea. 1631. 1632. (In the author's The strange and dangerovs voyage of Captaine Thomas Iames, in his intended discouery of the Northwest Passage into the South Sea. London, 1633)

    Along with Luke Fox, James charted the Hudson Bay coast from Cape Henrietta Maria to Port Nelson.
    Later, he explored and named James Bay, depicted in greater scale in the inset at top right.

18. MUNK, JENS, 1579-1628

A map of Groenland. (In the author's An account of a most dangerous voyage perform'd by the famous Capt. John Monck, in the years 1619, and 1620. [London, 1704])

The "account is a translation from the High-Dutch original, printed 1650, and is detached from Awnsham Churchill's A collection of voyages and travels. Like James, Munk was commissioned to search for a northwest passage to Asia.
Here "Christians Sea" and "New Sea" are Hudson and James Bays, while the "wintering" place is the estuary of the Churchill River.

19. MERCATOR, GERARDUS, 1512-1594

Atlas sive Cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mvndi et fabricati figvra. Dvisbvrgi Cl[ivorvm, 1602]

The complete atlas, including the posthumously issued Pars altera, was published in this form only twice—in 1595 and in 1602. The maps are hand-coloured.
"Islandia", presented here, was a landmark newly-accurate map made by Bishop Gudbrandur Thorlaksson in 1585. It became the standard depiction of Iceland until the mid-eighteenth century.

20. WYTFLIET, CORNEILLE

Granata nova et California. (In the author's Histoire vniverselle des Indes, orientales et occidentales. Douay [1605])

The Histoire is translated from the author's Descriptionis Ptolemaicae augmentum, the first atlas concerned entirely with North America. Baja (or Lower) California appears correctly as a peninsula.

21. SANSON, NICOLAS, 1600-1667

Audience de Guadalajara, Nouveau Mexique, Californie, &c. (In the author's L'Amerique, en plvsievrs cartes novvelles. Paris [ca. 1665])

Here, as in many maps of the period, Baja California is drawn as an island.

22. SPEED, JOHN, 1552?-1629

Cornwall. (In the author's A prospect of the most famous parts of the vvorld. London, 1662)

The Prospect, which first appeared under this title in 1627, is the third edition of the Theatre of the empire of Great Britain. The 1610 original of this map was made by John Norden.
"Launceston or ancient Dunhevet", the inset at top, shows the Early English church of Saint Stephen. As seat of the Earls of Cornwall, the castle was besieged often in the seventeenth century.

23. CLÜVER, PHILIPP, 1580-1622

Antiqvae Germaniae septemptrionalis descriptio. (In the author's Germaniae antiqvae libri tres. Lugduni Batavorum, 1616)

A German geographer and historian, Clüver published authoritative descriptive works such as this and the accompanying Introdvctionis in vniversam geographiam (1659). Both are Elzevir imprints.
In the map, the Kanin Peninsula again is shown as an island.

MATERIALS IN THE WEST READING ROOM CASES

24. SANSON, NICOLAS, 1600-1667

Carte generale d'Espagne et de tous les royaumes y compris. Paris, 1658.

Sanson, the "geographe ordinaire du roi" of Abbeville, was the foremost map publisher of mid-seventeenth-century France.
This map is included in the author's Cartes générales de tovtes les parties dv monde (1658).
The prime meridian is Ferro.

25. EICHOFF, CYPRIAN

Deliciae Hispaniae et index viatorivs, indicans itinera, ab vrbe Toleto, ad omnes in Hispania civitates et oppida, qvorum indicantvr deliciae. Vrsellis, 1604.

The German geographer Eichoff issued several travellers' guide-books like this, among them those for Germany and Italy. This work contains ten maps, of which "Andalvsia" and "Aragonia" show the south and eastern coastlines of Spain.
Just west of Puerto Real (Preal) is Leon Island, site of Cadiz.

26. ORTELIUS, ABRAHAM, 1527-1598

An epitome of Ortelivs, his Theatre of the vvorld, vvherein the principal regions of the earth are described in smalle mappes. London [1610]

This is a pocket-atlas of the author's Theatrum orbis terrarum, printed by Henricus Swingenius for John Norton. It first appeared in English about 1603.
Displayed here is "Iaponia insvla", based on the map of Japan compiled in 1595 by Father Ludovico Texeira.
European maps of Japan began to be produced only in the late sixteenth century. This became the prototype, showing the island of Kyushu (Bonga) running north and south and the larger island of Honshu due east and west.

27. NIEUHOF, JOHAN, 1618-1672

A description of China. (In the author's An embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Grand Tartar Cham, Emperor of China, deliver'd by their excellencies, Peter de Goyer and Jacob de Keyzer, at his imperial city of Peking. 2nd ed. London, 1673)

Nieuhof joined the trade embassy as steward.
Translated from the original Dutch, the volume and map illustrate the deep acquaintance with China of a Dutch traveller in the middle 1650's.

28. DAMPIER, WILLIAM, 1652-1715

A map of the East Indies.
A map of the Streights of Malacca.

These charts are in the first two volumes of the author's Voyages (London, 1699-1729), and result from his venture to the East Indies in 1686.
Admittedly a pirate, Dampier is considered to have been an expert hydrographer and chart-maker.

29. CHARDIN, JOHN, 1643-1713

Ponti euxini cum regionibus versus septentrionem et orientem adjacentibus nova tabula an? 1672. (In the author's The travels of Sir John Chardin into Persia and the East-Indies. London, 1686)

During his second journey to the East, Chardin spent several months at Constantinople. After a quarrel between the grand vizier and the French ambassador, he escaped from there across the Black Sea by way of Caffa (now Feodosiya), western present-day Georgia (Colchis) and Armenia to Ispahan, where he remained four years.

30. EVELYN, JOHN, 1620-1706

Navigation and commerce, their original and progress. London, 1674.

Evelyn was an accomplished country gentleman who wrote widely on many practical subjects. Here his interest is in trade and the history of navigation.

31. PERKINS, PETER

The seaman's tutor: explaining geometry, cosmography, and trigonometry. London, 1682.

This is a textbook on navigation issued posthumously and completed by the author's brother, Eysum Perkins. It was intended for the use of students at Christ's Hospital, London.

32. OUGHTRED, WILLIAM, 1575-1660

The circles of proportion and the horizontall instrument &c. Rev., corr. ed. Oxford, 1660.

The first edition of this work appeared in 1632. Translated from Latin by William Forster, it is a classic treatise on navigation.

Verniece Webber
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Cover designed by Tom Reid,
showing part of map no. 3

Exhibition mounted by Emrys Evans
and Linda Joy